

# **EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT**

**East Providence City Hall**

**145 Taunton Avenue**

**East Providence, RI 02914**

## **School Committee Meeting**

**August 12, 2008**

### **Open Session**

**Mrs. Morris, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:50 PM. School Committee Members present: Anthony Carcieri, Stephen DeCastro, Robert Faria, Steven Santos and Mildred Morris. Also present: Mr. Edward Daft, Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Daniel Kinder, Esq. and Ms. Sara Rapport, Esq.**

**Mrs. Morris announced that a vote had been taken in executive session at the July 24, 2008 School Committee meeting to appoint Daniel Kinder's firm as legal counsel to the School Department, with a 3 to 2 vote: Mr. Santos, Mr. Carcieri and Mr. Faria voting aye; Mr. DeCastro and Mrs. Morris voting "nay." Mrs. Morris requested that a vote be taken in public session. A motion was made by Mr. Faria to accept the bid for legal services from Little Medeiros Kinder Bulman & Whitney PC, seconded by Mr. Santos.**

**Under discussion: Mr. DeCastro stated that when they met that evening and went through the proposals, the reason to look at legal services was to look under every rock to get value; these legal fees will be higher by 20% and he thinks in times of struggling with money, a 20% legal increase is not warranted going into negotiations with minimum pay increases and significant health care increases. He never had the opportunity to interview candidates and this is the first time he met the attorney tonight; if the reason was to save money and there are additional fees; this is not being responsive to the taxpayers. Mr. Faria said the proposal given by Mr. Kinder's firm indicated fees; the proposal given offered a rate, not just hourly.**

**Mr. Carcieri said that East Providence does not want to be paying more for services rendered; but the School Committee is looking for a whole new fresh approach; we had the other firm 15-16 years; we have many issues to address and it was important to have legal representation with a new outlook on problems in the department; it was not just price only. Mrs. Morris hoped the fresh new look would serve the School Committee well in the next two years and she read from a statement. She wished Mr. Silva (former attorney) well and will miss his guidance; she was sorry to see him go.**

**Mr. DeCastro said the proposal from Kinder had a fee with a limited number of hours and we will end up paying a \$150 per hour rate; he read from the minutes of the June 23rd meeting where Mr. Faria**

**stated that we needed to “separate the person from the issue.” Mr. DeCastro noted we are going into negotiations asking for co-pays with a 20% increase in legal fees and with a shortfall in the budget.**

**Mr. Carcieri thought the School Committee only needed to vote in public on a vote already taken in an executive session. Mrs. Morris said that comments were OK and she noted that the Kinder firm will charge for copying and bill us for it; she asked to add up all the little things.**

**Motion: Mr. Faria, seconded by Mr. Santos. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Carcieri, aye; Mr. DeCastro, nay; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mrs. Morris, nay. Vote 3-2 to approve. Motion to seal the minutes of the executive session by Mr. Faria, seconded by Mr. Carcieri. Vote 5-0.**

**The Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence were observed.**

**Record of Previous Meetings – A motion was made by Mr. Faria to approve the minutes of the meetings held on June 23, 2008 and July 7, 2008, seconded by Mr. Santos. Discussion: Mr. DeCastro asked for a correction on page 9 of the June 23, 2008 minutes; he wanted reflected in the minutes that he asked if a particular individual had been used as a long term sub (page 9)**

**Report of the Superintendent and Staff**

**Mr. Barham, Director of Human Resources, presented the following**

**personnel items:**

## **APPOINTMENTS**

**John Craig    Asst. Principal, Discipline, EPHS**

**Tricia Barry    Art, MMS**

**Jennine Cerra    Special Subjects - Library**

**Lauren Bryda    Grade 3 Teacher, Whiteknact (1 yr. only)**

**Christal DaSilva    English Teacher, EPHS (1 yr. only)**

**Amy Giammarco    Math Teacher, EPHS**

**Mary Ellen Hatch    Vocational Culinary Arts Teacher, CTC**

**Emilie Joost    Nurse-Teacher 1:1 – Waddington**

**Liliya Kryz    Art Teacher, EPHS**

**James Mihalos    Social Studies/Business Teacher, EPHS**

**Mathew Pierce    Biology/Chemistry Teacher, EPHS**

**Ray Pinson    Vocational Automotive Tech Teacher, CTC**

**Casey Sabourin    Grade 4 Teacher, Hennessey**

**Lauren Salzillo    Grade 1 Teacher, Orlo Avenue (1 yr. only)**

**(School to be determined-bid in progress)**

**Alisha Shorts    English Teacher, RMS (1 yr. only)**

**Nicole Sousa    Band Director, EPHS (1 yr. only)**

**S. Robert Traverse, Jr.    Guidance Counselor, MMS**

**Patricia Armstrong    Virtual Learning Academy – Portfolio, EPHS**

**Deborah Ormerod    Virtual Learning Academy – Spec. Ed., EPHS**

**David Shadrick    Virtual Learning Academy – Soc Studies, EPHS**

**Richard Silva    Student Council Co-Advisor, EPHS**

**Richard Silva    National Honor Society Advisor, EPHS**

**Danika Bishop    Freshman Student Advisor, EPHS**

**Kerrie Avjian    Student Liaison, EPHS**

**Marissa Lombardo    Student Liaison, EPHS**

**Judy McNulty    Student Liaison, EPHS**

**Ana Melo    Student Liaison, EPHS**

**Diana Morvillo    Student Liaison, EPHS (1 year only)**

**Heather Pastina    Student Liaison, EPHS**

**Angelo Pizzi    Student Council Co-Advisor, EPHS**

**Michelle Chamberlin    Head Teacher, Kent Heights School**

**Karen Brill    Head Teacher, Oldham School**

**Elizabeth Belasco    Head Coach, Girls' Soccer, EPHS**

**Daniel Silva    Asst. Coach, Boys' Soccer, EPHS**

**Brian Petsch    Head Coach, Girls' Softball, EPHS**

**Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mr. DeCastro.**

**Discussion: Mr. DeCastro raised the issue of the nepotism policy and asked if all had signed a waiver that they are not related to any administrators. Discussion regarding the Reading Supervisor; she “coordinates programs and does not supervise, but is paid under the administrative salary category. Mr. Daft explained that this individual is a reading supervisor only and does not have administrative certification. Mr. DeCastro asked how we define administrator under this new policy. Mr. Faria thought it would be their certification as an administrator ; the scope is pretty clear. Mr. Daft explained that the reading supervisor supports teachers and is funded through Title I. Mr. DeCastro does not feel comfortable approving this under the new**

policy; the School Committee needs to be clear on this. Mr. Faria does not recall getting any information that she is related; asked if a piece is missing here. Mr. DeCastro still does not support the policy but if the School Committee has one, they need to follow it.

Mr. Barham related that he asked all the candidates if they were related to School Committee members or administrators and Dr. Forbes interpretation was that the Reading Supervisor was not an administrator. Mr. DeCastro asked if the Director of Transportation is an administrator. Mrs. Morris thought all administrators at administration building are classified as administrators. Mr. Barham said there is a need to clarify this for the future. Mr. DeCastro thought if it quacks like a duck, it probably is. Mrs. Morris thought Mrs. Salzillo was considered an administrator. Mr. Faria said there is a need to acknowledge her as an administrator with a waiver. Mr. Barham felt the policy was nebulous and he did not want to hold up appointments until next month. Mr. DeCastro had a problem with the process; the School Committee can waive the nepotism policy by a majority and he believes this individual is an administrator. He asked for a legal opinion.

Mr. Kinder related that the term administrator is not defined in the policy; administration does not define her as one; she has no certification; the School Committee is faced with a lack of definition and is free to decide if this person is an administrator or not; School Committee is free to construe the policy as they wish; certainly a rational basis this is not an administrator. Mr. DeCastro said if

approved without it, we are opening a Pandora's box. Mrs. Morris asked to delay it until next meeting; however, Mr. Barham said this is the second time this person has been on the docket and there is a need to fill positions prior to the opening of school.

## **RETIREMENTS**

**R. Christopher Durigan, Jr. (25 yrs) Industrial Arts Teacher, MMS**  
**Effective immediately**

**Beverly McGreevy (17 yrs) English Teacher, RMS**  
**Effective immediately**

**Nancy Gama (14 yrs) Secretary, Special Services, ADM**  
**Effective October 31, 2008**

**Estelle Machon (20 yrs) Secretary, Human Resources, ADM**  
**Effective October 31, 2008**

**Marshall Williams (14 yrs) Bus Assistant**  
**Effective July 1, 2008**

**Motion: Mr. DeCastro/Second: Mr. Santos. Vote 5-0.**

## **RESIGNATIONS**

**William Capron Interim Director, Finance and Administration**

**Judith LaCross    Reading Teacher, Kent Heights,**

**Effective immediately**

**Christine Borrelli    Math Teacher, EPHS**

**Gregory Decoteaux    Physics Teacher, EPHS**

**Amy Manchester    Speech Language Pathologist**

**Erin Welchman    School Nurse-Teacher 1:1, Waddington**

**Patricia Piros    E-portfolio Coordinator, EPHS**

**Brian Ferreira    Head Coach, Wrestling, MMS**

**Gerald Dias    Technology Coordinator, CTC**

**Loretta Morissette    Bus Assistant**

**Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mr. Santos. Vote 5-0.**

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**Kristen Pruett    Special Ed, Resource, Hennessey/Oldham**

**September 2, 2008 – November 7, 2008**

**Kerri Gravina    Grade 3 Teacher, Whiteknact**

**2008-2009 School Year**

**Christopher Dante    English Teacher, MMS**

**2008-2009 School Year**

**S. Robert Traverse, Jr.    Social Studies Teacher, EPHS**

**2008-2009 School Year**

**Geoffrey Higginbotham    English Teacher, EPHS**



## **2008-2009 School Year**

**Motion: Mr. Santos/Second: Mr. Faria. Vote 5-0.**

**Mr. Santos asked about the names which were added to the personnel docket, which is different from the posting on the Secretary of State's website. Mr. Barham added names over the weekend out of necessity; he had a resignation, a name was withdrawn from June; there is a need to grab good teachers and he needed to make last minutes changes. Mrs. Morris said that people know who is being hired before the School Committee votes. Mr. Santos said these are recommendations only. Vote 5-0. All aye. Mrs. Morris expressed deep regret on the resignation of Mr. William Capron, Interim Director of Administration and Finance, who will be sadly missed.**

## **RECALLS**

**Christina Salois 3/5 French/2/5 Portuguese, EPHS**

**Kerstin Calia Vocational Health Occupations, CTC**

**Kathleen Gouveia Special Subjects - Art**

**Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Santos. Vote 5-0.**

## **Payment of Bills**

## **Local Operating Bill List**

**Warrant #000844 8/5/08 \$1,000,000.33**

**Motion: Mr. Carcieri/Second: Mr. Faria. Vote 5-0.**

### **Federal Bill List**

**Warrant #000843 8/5/08 \$ 681,191.62**

**Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mr. DeCastro. Vote 5-0.**

### **Superintendent Interviews**

**The following candidates were interviewed for the position of Superintendent of Schools:**

**Dr. Mario Cirillo**

**Dr. David Baker**

**Dr. Kristen Stringfellow**

**Mr. David Britto**

**Upon conclusion of the interviews, discussion took place; Mr. DeCastro asked if the audience would be allowed to ask questions. Mrs. Morris was not in agreement with not following policy; there was no steering committee, which was part of the process to ask questions. Members of the School Committee have asked for parent input and community involvement before; this should be part of that process. A motion was made by Mr. DeCastro to allow the audience to ask questions, seconded by Mr. Faria for discussion. Discussion on how to approach this. Mrs. Morris said each candidate will be**

asked the same question. Vote: Mr. Carcieri, nay; Mr. DeCastro, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye. School Committee recessed briefly and reconvened at 7:50PM.

Interviews and questions concluded at 9:40PM. Motion by Mr. Faria to move to executive session in accordance with RI General Laws, Section 42-46-5 (a) (1) Personnel, (a) (2) Collective Bargaining/Litigation, seconded by Mr. DeCastro. Vote 5-0.

The School Committee returned to public session at 11:00PM. A motion was made by Mr. Faria to return to public session and to seal the minutes of the executive session, seconded by Mr. Santos. Vote 5-0.

Mrs. Morris thanked everyone for attending and participating; no decision or vote was taken in executive session; the School Committee will meet on Sunday, August 17, 2008 at the School Administration Building to announce the name of the new Superintendent. Mrs. Morris was not happy with the process; there was no time to check on candidates' background; it was the consensus of the School Committee to meet on Sunday. Mr. DeCastro felt that there was not enough time allowed for the process and that it was rushed. Mr. Carcieri said he was one of the people asking to move this process along as quickly as possible, as we need to have a permanent Superintendent in place for important business which needs to be done and he took that into consideration. Mr. Daft

also related that it is important to select a Superintendent soon particularly since the Director of Administration and Finance is leaving, it is time to submit a budget, participate in negotiations and prepare for the new school year. Mr. DeCastro said that's why we have an Interim Superintendent. Mrs. Morris asked what is the Interim Superintendent doing; why is he not preparing the budget; we pay him \$450 per day. Mr. Faria said it is a difference of opinion; Dr. Forbes did the budget with Mr. Capron; he asked to put this decision off to Sunday. Mrs. Morris said we are spending more and more money every time we turn around.

A member of the audience spoke out about candidates for Superintendent; he felt that at least two candidates showed leadership qualities in the interview process and asked the School Committee to make the right decision for East Providence.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant**

**Steven Santos, Clerk of the Committee**